

August 30, 2023



FROM THE DESK OF
COMMISSIONER
BRENT BAILEY
CENTRAL DISTRICT OFFICE



The Central District is pleased to bring you the latest information concerning utility rates, project developments, Public Service Commission actions and other news you can use. I hope you will find this information to be a useful resource to learn about the Public Service Commission, consumer issues and the continuous work we are doing for the citizens in the Central District and across the state of Mississippi. Thank you again for allowing me to serve you in this capacity.

Brent Bailey

**Latest NERC Report Lists
“Energy Policy” as New Area
of Risk to Grid Reliability**

**HURRICANE
IDALIA**

The [2023 ERO Reliability Risk Priorities Report](#), which was accepted by the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) Board of Trustees recently at its quarterly meeting, is a forward-looking view of current and projected risks to overall power system reliability. The report presents the results of the NERC Reliability Issues Steering Committee’s (RISC) efforts to strategically define and prioritize risks to electric generation and transmission reliability. The RISC functions as an advisory committee to NERC’s Board of Trustees and produces this report every two years.

Until this year, NERC has categorized risk profiles within four general areas: *Grid Transformation*; *Resilience to Extreme Events*; *Security Risks*; and *Critical Infrastructure Interdependencies*. NERC now identifies *Energy Policy* as a new risk profile. *Energy Policy* has broad implications across the other risk profiles as it can drive change and has the potential to amplify their effects. Consequently, energy policy can impact bulk power system (BPS) planning and operations in short time periods, affecting reliability and resilience.

Certain energy policies that promote decarbonization, generation decentralization and full electrification have been gaining traction across the nation. The application of these policies is causing some reliability challenges to emerge across certain parts of the grid. When intertwined with changes in the energy resource mix, extreme weather conditions, and physical/cyber security challenges, energy policy decisions could create deficiencies in resource adequacy and variable performance of the overall grid if energy policy expectations exceed practical reality. Or energy policy could spur buildout of generation and transmission assets. However, that could come at a steep cost to customers if the energy resources and infrastructure are not developed in coordination with regional market operators.

To mitigate energy policy risks, there should be an increased collaboration between federal and state policymakers, regulators, owners and operators of the overall energy grid to understand implications of policy decisions.

More than 400 utility linemen from numerous utilities around the state of Mississippi have made their way to Florida and Georgia to assist utilities in those states pick up the pieces, rebuild the system and restore power to residents after Hurricane Idalia moves across the area. Idalia quickly intensified from a tropical storm to making landfall as an extremely dangerous category 3 hurricane over a 24-hour period.

Evacuations and disaster declarations were issued across Florida as the predictions of a significant storm grew. Electric power restoration efforts could last for a week or more. Please keep the safety of those men and women in your prayers as they travel to and from the impacted area and as they work in challenging conditions.



Continued...

Unintended consequences of what is thought to be noble policy objectives could result in risks to reliability and resilience or the placement of unnecessary structural or economic barriers that actually enhance risk factors.

The [2023 ERO Reliability Risk Priorities Report](#) also surveys the energy industry on risks to the bulk power system reliability and stability. For the past two survey cycles (2021 and 2023), industry has identified “changing resource mix” as the highest risk due to the migration from large coal-fired and nuclear power plants to natural gas-fired power plants, renewable and distributed energy resources. Industry sees this transformation as resulting in a different use of power lines from how the grid was originally constructed. Other risk factors identified by the energy industry include resource adequacy and performance, cybersecurity vulnerabilities, extreme natural events, critical infrastructure interdependencies, and bulk power system planning.

MPSC Files Comments on DOE Transmission Corridor Proposal

In early August, the Mississippi and Louisiana Public Service Commissions raised concerns about the federal government’s latest effort to supersede state government authority to determine if, when, and where some high voltage electric transmission facilities may be constructed. In 2005, Congress passed the Energy Policy Act to, among other things, empower federal government agencies such as the Department of Energy (DOE) and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to identify areas in the country where they believe transmission facilities are needed to address reliability and congestion. These determinations have historically been left to the states and state jurisdictional electric utilities. Early efforts to exercise that federal authority failed.

On May 15, 2023, almost 20 years after the passage of the 2005 law, and in response to recent Congressional laws providing funding for transmission and generation development, the DOE is taking a second swing at transmission siting. The DOE issued a Notice of Intent and Request for Information to inquire into establishing a process to “designate ‘route-specific’ National Interest Electric Transmission Corridors (NIETCs).” This process would also permit for-profit developers of transmission facilities to “propose a potential route for designation of a NIETC, which if accepted would make those projects eligible for [FERC] back-stop siting and potentially provide access to funds under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and the Inflation Reduction Act.”

Mississippi and Louisiana regulators [filed comments](#) opposing the proposal. We argued that federal law does not authorize private entities to identify transmission routes based upon their own private plans and economic interests. The Notice of Intent ignores the economic harm this process would impose on state retail customers and disrespects the jurisdiction and authority of state regulators over retail rates and services. The proposal would allow private developers to determine what transmission facilities are in the national interest and where those lines will be located, and to exclude consideration of alternative, lower cost projects (such as certain generation technologies) and alternative routing options. Furthermore, the proposal fails to consider the billions of dollars of transmission put in place and in development through participation in Regional Transmission Organizations like the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (in which Louisiana and Mississippi utilities participate). These organizations, with state regulatory participation, already address the reliability and congestion issues that the NITEC process is intended to address.

In the end, the Commissions recommended that DOE not proceed with its proposal, or in the alternative, exclude states that participate in RTOs. We will provide updates on this proceeding in future newsletters.



Last Week at the MPSC

- ✎ **TecInfo Communications, LLC** filed their Lifeline Services [Tariff](#) No. 2 in accordance with the Regulations and Schedule of Intrastate Charges Applying to the Provision of Lifeline Services within the State.
- ✎ Individuals filed a [Formal Complaint](#) against **South Central Water Association** for Failure to Provide Reasonably Adequate Water Service on Holliday Road in **Hinds County**.
- ✎ An Individual filed their [Notice](#) of Withdrawal of Intervention and Objection to Application of **West Madison Utility District** for a Supplemental Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity Authorizing It to Operate and Maintain a Water System in a Specified Area an **Madison County**. The parties entered into a [Stipulation](#) agreeing to future water service options.
- ✎ **Great River Utility Operating Company, LLC** filed its [Revised Schedules](#) in regard to its Petition for Approval of the Sale and Transfer of Certain Assets, Facilities, Property, and Certificates of Public Convenience and Necessity for the Provision of Wastewater Disposal Service in **Harrison, Hinds, and Rankin Counties**. The filing is intended to correct errors discovered in the original versions of the documents submitted on March 30, 2023. It is **Great River's** intent that the attached documents replace the originally filed documents in their entirety. No Central District systems are impacted by the revisions.

CENTRAL DISTRICT SNAPS



There was a great turnout last Wednesday for the Ragsdale Solar Park Project community engagement event in Canton! Local and county leaders joined EDP Renewables, Signal Energy Constructors and Beta Engineering to share key details about this clean energy resource. The 100 MW project represents a \$160 million investment in Madison County. Over the life of the project, Ragsdale Solar Park will contribute over \$36 million to local governments with more than half of that amount going to the Canton Public School District. Nearly 200 workers will begin mobilizing at the project site along Hwy 43 south of Canton within the next month!



FROM THE DESK OF
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I was proud to join Atmos Energy and the Community Foundation for Mississippi in Rolling Fork last Thursday to announce contributions made to the Washington County Community Foundation for the Rolling Fork community. We also had the pleasure of joining in on the fun of the appreciation lunch hosted by Atmos for tornado survivors and the community. It's refreshing to see the efforts of Atmos Energy as they keep Rolling Fork and other affected communities in mind as the residents and businesses continue to rebuild. We appreciate Mayor Walker and the residents of Rolling Fork for their hospitality.



While visiting the town of Rolling Fork last week, we took a few snaps of some well-known and loved spots around the city, including the famous Twin County Electric Power Association wood-carved lineman bear, our friends at Mississippi 811, Inc., the city's Courthouse and water tower, and Chuck's Dairy Bar. It's really moving to see the progress being made by the residents and businesses of this City come together to rebuild.

FROM THE DESK OF COMMISSIONER BRENT BAILEY CENTRAL DISTRICT OFFICE



Thanks to Jan Collins and the Madison County Business League and Foundation for the invitation to their quarterly program Tuesday. The group heard updates from Entergy's Haley Fisackerly and Madison County Economic Development Authority's Joey Deason. Lots happening in Madison County.



On Tuesday evening in Port Gibson, MS, I conducted a public hearing on Cooperative Energy's Petition for Certificate for over 26 miles of new 115 kv transmission line, switching station and other facilities. The proposed project will provide an additional path for electric service to improve reliability for the Utica community, particularly the Hinds Community College Utica Campus. The proposed \$27 million project will also improve service quality and support growth and economic development in portions of Claiborne, Copiah, and Hinds Counties.

Mark your calendars Central District!

We are excited to announce our upcoming utility community forums in the Central District! The first one will kick off in Madison County. These forums will give you the opportunity to learn more about the Commission and its responsibilities. We look forward to discussing ideas and receiving feedback from those who can attend. Additional locations and dates will soon be announced. We hope to see you there! [Click here for MORE information.](#)



Just a reminder that our office will be closed this coming Monday, September 4 in observance of Labor Day. We will be back on Tuesday, September 7. Whether you're hitting the road or staying home, have a safe holiday weekend!

COMMUNITY FORUM

Let's talk about your **UTILITY SERVICES**

COMMISSIONER BRENT BAILEY

SEPTEMBER 12 2023 **6:00 P.M.**

Pinhook Church Campus
223 Old Jackson Road
Madison, Mississippi

JOIN US TO DISCUSS UTILITY SERVICES FOLLOWING THE SEVERE STORMS IN JUNE. WERE YOU AFFECTED? TELL US NOW! BRING US OTHER UTILITY QUESTIONS OR ISSUES IMPORTANT TO YOU!

FREE EVENT

1-800-356-6430 www.psc.ms.gov/central/commissioner
CommissionerBrentBailey

Click flyer to enlarge



Last week, our Consumer Complaint Specialists handled a total of **40** complaints in the Central District.

Electric Companies	36
Telecommunications	3
Natural Gas	1

SAVE THE DATE:

SEPTEMBER DOCKET MEETING

Thursday, September 7 at 10 am in the MPSC Hearing Room ([Link to Notice](#))